Green Focus


Greens Run For All State Offices

By Crescenzo Vellucci

Hoping to join the 62 Greens already elected in California, at least 42 Green Party candidates are running for office in 2006 — from Governor and US Senate to school board and a local transportation seat, according to the most recent information provided by the Secretary of State, and county registrars of voters.

In fact, the June Primary is shaping up to be an unusual election cycle because Greens are involved in some competitive races, putting one Green Party candidate against another for the right to win the Primary and move on to the November General Election. The two contested Green primaries are the U.S. Senate and the Assembly (44th Dist).

Additionally there are two Greens running for mayor in Sonoma and Richmond, and eight Greens running for city council or supervisorial seats across the state. And, then there is former Pasadena mayor, Bill Paparian, running for Congress.

Greens are also fielding candidates in all statewide constitutional offices. At the head of the ticket is Peter Camejo, who has run twice before for governor. Laura Wells is making her second run for Controller, as is Donna Warren for Lt. Governor. These Green candidates need support. They do not accept corporate contributions, and are at a disadvantage in raising money for their campaigns — so they rely upon other Greens to support, either financially or with volunteer efforts up and down the state.

To that end, Green Focus has attempted to contact those running for office. We’ve included below the best information available concerning Green candidates, and how to reach them to volunteer in or contribute to their campaigns. For more information, see (click 2006 elections at right for a full list of candidates):

Constitutional Offices

Peter Camejo, making what he terms his “final” run for Governor, has opened his campaign by attacking Republicans and Democrats for not solving the state’s problems. Specifically, Camejo says that he could generate tens of billions of dollars if corporations and the wealthiest in the state — who are taxed at a lower rate compared to other taxpayers — would pay their fair share.

Donna Warren, running for the second time for Lt. Governor, wants to end the deathpenalty, amend the 3-strikes law and use tax dollars for “schools not prisons.” Mike Wyman, the attorney general candidate and longtime GPCA treasurer, says he will defend the “rights of the people” in the state against misdeeds by governmental agencies.

And, Forrest Hill, the Sec. of State candidate, is a strong promoter of IRV financier campaigning for Insurance Commissioner, has already produced materials attacking Democratic Party candidate Cruz Bustamante for receiving large hunks of cash from insurance companies.

Sara Knopp, running for the State Superintendent of Instruction office is a teacher and activist; is opposed to any military recruiting on campuses, and wants to “reduce class size immediately, stop the testing and accountability craze, desegregate our school, free pre-K for all, lower college tuition, make sure all children receive a quality education, giving teachers a raise and more college counseling.”

State Assembly Offices:

Seven Greens are campaigning, including two Pasadena candidates — Philip Koebel and Ricardo Costa, who are going head-to-head for the Green nomination in District 44. It’s believed to be the first-ever contested Green Party Primary for Assembly. Others running for Assembly include Gerald Fritts (4th Dist.), Cat Woods (6th Dist), Barry Hermanson (12th Dist), David Silva (34th Dist), and Peter Thottam (53rd Dist).

Fritts is working for campaign reform, universal healthcare and a mass transit system similar to those in Japan and Europe, Hermanson is one the architects of the San Francisco minimum wage and state minimum wage campaign, Costa said he wants “unions and
working people to know they have real options,” Silva is calling for a progressive energy plan, including fitting community buildings with solar panels, converting sewage into energy and a half to sprawl. Woods, a longtime social justice activist, supports ranked voting and publicly financed elections to reduce the influence of corporate money.

State Senate:

Two Greens have filed papers: Matthew Rick (18th Dist) and Bob Vizzard (4th Dist). Rick is calling for “unconventional reform in statewide issues ranging from emission standards to the prison. Vizzard, a doctor, is a leader healthcare reform, specifically issues ranging from emission standards to the prison. Vizzard, a doctor, is a leader healthcare reform, specifically

House of Representatives:

Seven California Greens are running in the Primary for a House seat, including Pam Elizondo (1st Dist), Jeff Kravitz (5th Dist), Krissy Keeker (8th Dist), Carol Brouillet (1-4th Dist), John Miller (21th Dist), Byron DeLuc (28th Dist) and William Paparian (29th Dist).

Two civil rights lawyers among the candidates - Paparian, a former Pasadena city attorney, successfully represented an environmentalist and anti-war activist wrongly accused of domestic terrorism. Paparian wants the U.S. out of Iraq and says members of Congress should “stand up to this rogue administration.” Kravitz, a constitutional law professor in Sacramento, who, like Paparian is also a civil rights lawyer says his primary goal would be to “defend the constitution” by attacking the administration’s war on terrorism as a fraud, and using the war as an “excuse” to holding people indefinitely without trial and for wiretapping without warrant.

Carol Brouillet, running in the Palo Alto area, is running hard on an “impeachment, peace, truth, justice, ecological wisdom” platform, charging that it is time to “impeach” the terrorists, while Byron DeLuc, a Los Angeles area journalist/independent producer, is running a strong anti-war campaign, and has called for the U.S. to take a “full-court press” approach on the scale of FDR’s New Deal to tackle Global Warming.

And, Miller, representing the Tulara/Fresno area, says that the environment is his main concern, but he is also focusing on education, energy, agriculture, land use planning, foreign affairs and constitutional rights. Keeker, running in the San Francisco congressional district, is experienced in San Francisco on land use issues regarding artists and low income housing. Her issues including ending the war, impeaching Bush, fighting Global Warming, ending the death penalty and healthcare for everyone.

Local Races:

Although the number may grow, at least 14 Greens are running for local office so far in 2006, from mayor, county supervisor and city council to school board. Two registered Greens are running for office of Mayor - Chip McAuley (Sonoma), Gayle McLaughlin (Richmond). Two Greens are poised as candidates for Supervisor – Pierre Fracyse (San Francisco) and Jo Chamberlain (San Mateo). Six Greens are on the ballot for City Council seats, including Aimee Allison (Oakland), Lara DeLaney (Martinez), Alan Drusys (San Bernardino), Dennis Kyne (San Jose), Donna Spring (Berkeley) and Gabrielle Weeks (Long Beach).

McLaughlin is a Green “rising star,” winning her first time out for the Richmond City Council two years ago. Allison, an anti-war conscientious objector in the first Gulf war, is considered a near-favorite in her second try in Oakland and Kyne is an anti-war, disabled veteran. Peoples and Rivas are all city council incumbents. Willis and Specter are also incumbents, and Fracyse is hoping to join fellow Green Ross Mirkarimi on the SF Board of Supervisors. Other races include: Tim Willis (incumbent), School Board in Santa Cruz; Selma Spector, Rent Stabilization Board in Alameda County; Emily Drennen, BART in San Francisco and Ginny-Marie Case, Neighborhood Council, Los Angeles.

Please Contact and SUPPORT our Green Candidates

Constitutional Offices Contact Information:

Peter Camejo, Governor: info@votecamejo.com
Donna Warren, Lt. Governor: corthcy@sbcglobal.net
Forrest Hill, Secretary of State: info@voteforrest.org
Mike Wyman, Attorney General: mswyman@comcast.net
Mehul Thakker, Treasurer: info@votehatker.com
Laura Wells, Controller: info@laurawells.org
Larry Cafiero, Insurance Commissioner: larry@inscomm@earthlink.net
Sarah Knopp, Supt. of Public Instruction: sarah@sf4super.org
KCM Curry, Board of Equalization:info@SouthCentralGreens.org

State Assembly Contact Information:

Gerald Fritts (4th Dist): Silverdollar@yahoo.com
Cat Woods (6th Dist): www.cagreens.org/marin/catwoods
Barry Hermanson (12th Dist): barry@hermansons.com
David Silva (34th Dist): david@silva.us
Richard Costa (44th Dist): costa44@gmail.com
Philip Koebel (44th Dist): koebel@gmail.com
Peter Thottam (53rd Dist): peterthottam@yahoo.com

U.S. House Contact Information:

Pamela Elizondo (1st Dist): pamelizondo@hotmail.com
Jeff Kravitz (5th Dist): info@kravitzforcongress.org
Krissy Keeker (8th Dist): info@krissyforcongress.com
Carole Brouillet (14th Dist): http://www.carolforgreens.org/
John Miller (21th Dist): http://www.greenglobenursery.com/
Byron DeLuc (28th Dist): http://www.deleareforcongress.com
John Paparian (29th Dist): http://www.paparianforcongress.com

Local Races Information:

Aimee Allison (Oakland): (510) 802-7108
Ginny-Marie Case (Oakland): http://www.greens.org/latex/9576756
Jo Chamberlain (San Mateo): jo@votecoj.org
Emily Drennen (San Francisco): http://www.emilydrennen.org/about.shtml
Dennis Kyne (San Jose): dkynemail@comcast.net
Gayle McLaughlin (Richmond): Gayle@BetterRichmond.net, 510-237-1256
Donna Spring (Berkeley): spring@berkeley.ca.us
Gabrielle Weeks (Long Beach): http://www.workwithweeks.com/issues.htm

U.S. Senate Contact Information:

Todd Chretien: info@todd4senate.org, http://www.todd4senate.org
Tian Harter: tian@tianharter.org, http://www.tianharter.org
Kent Mesplay: kmesplay@msn.com, http://www.mesplay.org

Register And Vote GREEN!
In response to “Which Way Forward for the Green Party?” (Green Focus, December 2005), the authors give the impression that the three ‘GDI proposals’ introduced at the 2005 national Green meeting in Tulsa fulfilled the desire because of an irrational fit of anti-democracy in the Green National Committee (GNC). In fact, a 2/3 majority of delegates defeated these proposals for a variety of reasons, including concern that they might disempower their own state Green Parties. Many Green delegates favored parts of the proposals but claimed that the whole proposal package, and have expressed hope that the proposals be rewritten and reintroduced. Others were turned off by the anger, guilt-tripping, and aggressive tactics of the presenters. Some delegates voted them down because they believed that the presenters at the meeting hoped for retaliations for the 2004 nomination of David Cobb and Pat LaMarche as national candidates. Lots of Greens have disagreed with the party over the years, including many who preferred Ralph Nader to Mr. Cobb in 2004 but who reject these methods. Retaliation is not an effective strategy for building a party; it’s more typical of the sectarian behavior of some members of left parties of the late 20th century, whose internal schisms and purges prevented them from ever achieving popular success.

For all the article’s complaints about Greens selling out to Democrats, one of the authors of the proposal, Steve Greenfield, left the Green Party... to reregister Democrat in order to compete with Sen. Hillary Clinton in the New York primary in 2006. This is exactly what Dems have been trying to persuade Greens to do all along — to keep electoral politics within the Democratic Party. We wish Steve success in his campaign, but as Greens we’re skeptical that any meaningful challenge can take place within the two-party system. The Steering Committee and GNC had good reason to rebuff a representative of the Utah faction who showed up at the Tulsa meeting, replacing the already recognized Utah delegates. He and his supporters have claimed that his faction has been given official ballot status by the state of Utah. In fact, there are already at least two state-recognized Green Parties (in Virginia and Missouri) that have no connection with the Green Party of the United States and do not meet the party’s qualifications for affiliation. The Green Party doesn’t base affiliation on recognition by a state government, nor does it automatically recognize persons who show up at national meeting claiming a right to be recognized as ‘state parties’ — if it did, what’s to prevent any outside group from calling itself Green and demanding recognition?

Many Green delegates in Tulsa took a dim view of the Utah faction because its members supported the acceptance of a party official who obstructed the Green Party’s national nominees’ names from appearing on the Utah ballot. The Green Party makes support for its national nominees a condition for state party affiliation. A political party has no obligation to reward members who sabotage its own presidential campaigns. The Nader/Camejo campaign itself affirmed this principle when it filed a lawsuit against the Michigan Reform Party for refusing to place their names on the state ballot. Furthermore, the Utah faction’s representative agreed to participate in mediation, but no one from the faction showed up for the mediation session or bothered to explain why. The faction’s bid for recognition is no longer an issue. Other claims in the article are equally specious. The split between Cobb and Nader supporters in 2004 has nothing to do with one side being liberal and the other radical; numerous ‘radicalists’ in the party favored the Cobb ticket, numerous ‘liberals’ favored Mr. Nader. David Cobb has indeed spoken at PDA events — not to assist progressive Democrats’ attempts to rehabilitate their party, but to offer the Green Party as the inevitable alternative for progressive Dems growing alienated from a party that more and more rejects them. Since a 2004 survey showed that a strong plurality (42%) of Greens once considered themselves progressive Dems, this is a vital strategy. Mr. Cobb’s speeches at PDA events are no more traitorous to third party aspirants; Ralph Nader’s meetings with and campaign advice for John Kerry in 2004. (Medea Benjamin has actively helped PDA raise money; however, Ms. Benjamin is neither a Green candidate or party official, so she is not accountable to the party.) The article’s authors represent a group of Greens that continues to blame the party for having nominated David Cobb and Pat LaMarche instead of endorsing Ralph Nader and Peter Camejo. (Mr. Nader rejected the prospect of a Green nomination in 2004.) They claim that the Cobb/LaMarche nomination drove the party to the fringe, since Cobb/LaMarche drew only a fraction of 1% on Election Day. But Nader/Camejo, while gaining a lot more votes than Cobb/LaMarche, also received less than 1%. Arguments about how the Green Party could have pulled a higher fraction of a percent or might have even have surpassed one percent are a waste of time.

The reason that both the Green nominees and Nader/Camejo were nearly irrelevant has nothing to do with the anything the Green Party decided in 2004, or the candidates it nominated, or whether the candidates pursued a ‘safe-states’ vs. ‘scorched-earth’ strategy. (Contrary to the article’s claim that Mr. Cobb ran a safe-state campaign and Mr. Nader an all-out campaign, the two ran mixed-message campaigns: Mr. Cobb campaigned in swing states as well as safe states, while Mr. Nader occasionally encouraged safe-state voting.)

It had everything to do with the fact that most voters who might have otherwised voted for antinuclear, anticorporate third party candidates instead made it their first priority to vote George W. Bush from the White House, which meant holding one’s nose and voting for John Kerry despite all the best arguments against ABB (‘Anybody But Bush’) from Greens and Naderites. A more productive approach would have been to work around this reality, to admit that 2004 was simply not going to be a productive year for Greens at the national level, because of external forces, and instead to concentrate on elections at state and local levels, i.e., not to tie the destiny of the Green Party to a single election in a single election year. The Green Party does not exist solely to run presidential candidates; rather, it runs presidential candidates for strategic purposes like advancing the party’s agenda publicly, assisting state and local campaigns, and helping state parties achieve ballot status. That’s the reality of national politics until the Green Party can run a presidential candidate with at least a small chance of winning. The authors of “Which Way Forward for the Green Party?” are unable to admit this, and have therefore launched a hunt for scapegoats, chief among whom are party leaders who supported Cobb/LaMarche.

As for the accusation that the nomination was deliberately slanted to favor David Cobb, the convention rules were ratified by an overwhelming majority of Green delegates, including many in states like California who favored the Nader ticket, and the nomination process adhered strictly to the approved rules. The subheading of “Which Way Forward for the Green Party?” should perhaps be “We don’t like the outcome – the convention must have been rigged!”

Ironically, Greens came out of 2004 as heroes, not because of the election itself, but because David Cobb (working with Libertarian nominee Michael Badarik) initiated the Ohio and New Mexico recount campaigns, after Mr. Kerry quickly conceded and Dems sat on their thumbs, in the wake of widespread complaints of vote obstruction and manipulation in these and other states. The recount paid off in terms of new respect for Greens and a surge of donations to the Green Party.

As page 7 of the December Green Focus said, “You must be the change you want to see in the world.” (Mahatma Gandhi) We must be gentle and loving with each other, not angry and aggressive.


Scott McLarty
(Media Coordinator of the Green Party of the United States, but the opinions expressed above are his own)

Budd Dickinson
(CA GPUS delegate)
Green Focus Newspaper of the GPCA Page 4

Opinion

By Roger Gray

A recent and heated discussion over a Green public event made me realize that many of my Green colleagues think of the party as a group of outsiders, whose best tactic is loud and rauous complaining. To be successful, we, as a party need to move beyond this outsider mindset.

Governing v. Complaining

Greens need to discover the difference between governing and merely criticizing or complaining.

As a party, we must learn to take up the reins of power, or we will all remain in a world controlled by the two big parties. It is a choice of maturing as a political party that speaks to people beyond our registered core, or serving as the noisy rabble to make ineffectual Democrats seem like a reasonable choice for moderates.

Greens are used to being outsiders in America. We tend to feel excluded from the halls of power, and marginalized by the mainstream media. The idea of running the government may seem laughable to many Greens, but it can be done!

Here are three suggestions, to help us take the next step, to begin to reshape our government institutions to serve the common good, not merely the worst impulses of personal greed and expediency.

1. Remember that Greens Are Governing

In my fairly progressive hometown, Pasadena, California, I tend not to mention my Green credentials. This works out okay because the local elections are non-partisan, and people tend to look at personality and issues over party labels.

In 1998 we had a Green City Councilman, but no one realized it. The greenest (small “g”) Councilmember now sitting, unless one rides a bike. I think he might be a Republican, but I don’t know. Likewise, our Mayor, who issued a Car Free Pasadena Day proclamation is a retired lawyer for a major bank; I think he might be registered Democrat. Again, I don’t know.

Since I do not have to mention my party affiliation, local other Greens and I can gain credit on issues based on our ideas, and not get labeled with the “fringe” and “outsider” and “nutcase” tags that traditionally attach to all third-parties. And that means, eventually, when one or more of us non-partisan Green office holders has developed a political base across party lines, our party can get elected to a partisan, state office.

Provided, that is, that we have taken care to associate the Green party with good ideas, inclusive and meanhingful approaches to issues, the ability to affectively govern (not just claim) and real grassroots democracy, including people who disagree with us.

Political stunts – and particularly public demonstrations of anger and displeasure – are a tried and true tactic in American politics. And the less influence a party or candidate has, the more extreme the tactic needed to get the message across.

2. Behave Like Someone Already In Charge

Imagine if a Republican councilmember participated in a parade, dressed as a rude caricature of many of her constituents?

What if a Democrat called other elected officials rude names and made himself so isolated from most of the other electeds that he was ineffectual on council?

What if a Green candidate described decent, upright folks who happened to work for corporate employers as “dupes of the capitalists”?

If Greens want to get elected we need to avoid alienating voters and governing officials from other parties.

I have talked to many non-Greens in an effort to double registration in our local area; most express sympathy with Green ideas, but are loathe to be officially associated with a group known as outsiders, with no apparent clue about governing.

That is not to say that satire as a tactic is out, or that being Green shouldn’t also be fun. But if Greens want to lead the way to a new and better America, then we must speak in a tone that many people find reasonable, and save the shill and angry voice for limited purposes.

3. You Be the Government

It’s easy to complain that the government is doing things wrong. Dare to be the government. You don’t have to run for office to be the government!

Every city and county has appointed committees and commission openings. Many go unfilled. To become a commissioner one must win only one “vote,” that of one council member. As often as not, its just a matter of filing out a form – since no one else has applied for the post, and the elected has forgotten to fill it!

Big donors have access to politicians, but they are usually too busy to serve on city commissions. These jobs go to local activists and neighborhood folks. Might as well be Green activists.

Appointed commissioners not only have access to the political process, they directly influence and sometimes make the basic governing decisions.

The Greens Party has a future; we provide voters a choice, for a change. But not if we fail to make ourselves worthy of governing.

Roger Gray is an appointed Transporation Commissioner in Pasadena, California, and a member of the Arroyo Seco Greens local. He can be reached at gongreener@snarlbargle.com

Editorial

Political corruption: It’s something we hear about nearly every day now.

Republicans are resigning - and some have been jailed - because they have been caught with their hands in the proverbial “cookie jar.” The Democrats play in the same sandbox.

As a newspaper reporter at the State Capitol, the GPCA press secretary, Cres Velucci, said he watched as wads of cash from special interests were hand-delivered to lawmakers on the floor of the Senate! He later quit his job as a Capitol Correspondent because, in large part, he said he didn’t want to be associated, even as a reporter, with this obscene political greed. He then re-registered Green.

The Green Party of California is helping to end the corruption of politics at the State Capitol. By monitoring, and helping rewrite “clean money” legislation in California, the Green Party of California is playing a vital role in changing this system that will benefit our candidates, and the 63 Greens already serving in the state.

Our work will increase the chances of victory for Green Party candidates competing against money-driven Republi cans and Democrats, who spend millions of dollars each election by shamelessly allowing themselves to be bought and paid for by special interest money.

The California Clean Money and Fair Elections Act would allow public funding of Green Party candidates. The bill has passed the Assembly, and is moving forward in the state Senate.

A previous version of this bill, AB 583, was met with stiff opposition by the Green Party of California legislative watchdogs, who noted it so strongly favored public funding for only the Democratic and Republican parties that it creates an even larger disparity between them and the smaller parties. The committee analysis of the bill agreed with us.

After the Green Party of California loudly complained, the bill was re-written, resulting in a full endorse- ment by the GPCA, as noted in this statement:

"AB 583 is a perfect opportunity for the CA legislature to demonstrate its dedication to removing special interest money as an influence in state elections. Funding candidates through a strict qualifying process guarantees public money will fund only serious and qualified candidates, including Greens."

Green Party candidates could receive tens of thousands, up to millions of dollars under this reform legislation.

With the promise of public funding for Assembly and Senate races as well as statewide offices, including Gover nor, Green Party candidates will be more competitive than ever before; ten of thousands of dollars could be made available for Green Party legislative candidates, and millions of dollars for our gubernatorial candidate.

The legislation doesn’t end political corruption, or the unfair competition of special interest money; it makes available for Green Party legislative candidates a fair playing field for Greens.

We can only do this if we have your financial support for the Green Party of California. Your generous contribution, as always, is not only needed, but appreciated. Please go to Greens website at www.cagreens.org to contribute.

Thank you.
Proposition 13 is Killing California

LA JOLLA. They began to arrive around 8:30 — the morning air was brisk, and the chill was not yet off the scenic bungalow overlooking the ocean in La Jolla. But they did come, and by 9 a.m. they were seated in the courtyard, ready to hear the Jarvis Taxpayers Association’s key Green activists assembled for an all-day “Future Focus” retreat designed to set the course for the Green party in San Diego County for the immediate future.

The morning began over a breakfast of bagels, toast, spreads and fruit as these committed greens first introduced themselves, their primary areas of interest, and their expectations for the day.

When the introductions were over, a marathon brainstorming session — ably led by Green candidate for County Supervisor Nanninga — ensued, in which participants were asked to talk about what they felt the priorities of GPSD should be for the next several years. We were told we could best deploy our limited resources to achieve these goals. Ideas ranged from the specific, such as collecting signatures to help qualifying a ballot initiative, to the general, such as “identify a strategy that pulls people together,” and “Tell our story — leverage our influence.”

Within a short time, a large white board was completely filled with very small printing, it was clear that a short-term goal of good ideas would not be a problem from which this group would not suffer. On the contrary, the rest of the day would be dedicated to paring down the ideas we had generated to a manageable number.

It was clear that everyone had exhausted their supply of new ideas and were beginning to revisit ones that were already listed on the board, it became clear that it was time to move on.

After a lunch break we all reconvened for the first of two afternoon sessions. Session one was dedicated to sifting through the ideas we had generated in the morning and trying to structure the information in such a way that we could begin to grapple with it. Bob Nanninga noticed that all of our ideas could be broadly classified into four categories: administrative function, electoral reform, peace and social justice. After a time it became clear that some sort of consensus was beginning to emerge on some topics. We all agreed we needed at least one major road that would be driven, that membership outreach was critical if our group was to grow and remain vital, that the election of Green candidates to local office was fundamental to our function as a political party, and that several people were passionate about media issues, electoral reform, and the peace movement.

In many cases, this might only be because businesses have been better positioned to take advantage of Proposition 13 rules to lower their evaluations.

By Lizlo Conner, San Diego Green Party

The net result is the fact that we, the home owners are being asked to pay the burden of local, real estate based taxation. In 1977-78, the valuation in Santa Clara County, and with it the tax burden, was divided about 50/50 between single family residential al” and condominium owners and businesses or other collective ownership. In the Santa Clara County Assessor’s latest Annual Report covering 2005-2006 fiscal year, that division has shifted to 67% of the tax burden falling on the home owner and only 33% falling on other holders.

In many cases, this might only be because businesses have been better positioned to take advantage of Proposition 8 rules to lower their evaluations. In other cases it has been possible for business interests to change ownership gradually so as to never trigger the sale of a property and its revised assessment. The Governon in this area has been to ask more and more or to give up services. While the City of Morgan Hill is running a deficit, the development community is walking around smiling. While Santa Clara County is talking about layoffs for next year, we find that there is no way make things work except by raising sales tax revenue buying more things that we don’t really need. While business complain about the lack of well educated workers, the burden of supporting our schools falls increasingly on the home owner and California Schools rank near the bottom in terms of per capita student funding.

Something just does not make sense out of this. While the Howard Jarvis folks continue to agitate for less and less taxes for the home owner, they are letting the rest of us pay for carrying their fair share. The Jarvis folks don’t want to talk about real estate taxation on businesses. Now, they are at it again, encouraging us to vote Prop. 13. Silicon Valley tax raisers would dismantle taxpayers rights?!

It is truly time to revisit both Proposition 13. Continued on Page 6

San Diego Greens, seen above, attracted almost two dozen people to a meeting geared to brainstorming the best ways to promote the party in their county.
To create a basis for confidence and ensure conclusive outcomes will require more than one kind of election reform. The VCR contains an election reform platform created to meet these criteria.

1) voting processes owned and operated entirely in the public domain, and
2) clean money laws to keep all corporate funds out of campaign financing, and
3) a voter verified paper ballot for every vote cast and additional uniform standards determined by a non-partisan nationally recognized commission, and
4) declaring election day a national holiday; and
5) counting all votes publicly and locally in the presence of citizen witnesses and credentialed members of the media, and
6) equal time provisions to be restored by the media along with a measurable increase in local, public control of the airwaves, and
7) presidential debates containing a minimum of three candidates, run by a non-partisan commission comprised of representatives of publicly owned media outlets, and
8) preferential voting and proportional representation to replace the winner-take-all system for federal elections;
9) local control is a strong theme in the peaceful revolution and so items within the VCR’s reform platform are likely to vary as more communities adopt their own customized versions. Arcata’s resolution is a template for other communities. The key ideas that should be left intact are: current conditions ensure inconclusive results and inherent uncertainty; a reform platform is needed to create a basis for confidence; and We The People are challenging the assumption of our Consent. The VCR says that when election conditions prevent conclusive outcomes, the Consent of the Governed is not being sought. According to the Declaration of Independence, the “just Powers” of the government derives from the Consent of the Governed. This Consent should not be assumed or taken for granted. Yet as long as we stay plugged into the current power structure, our Consent is given, however begrudgingly. The VCR is a unit, community-level way to begin municipal civil disobedience. This is about non-recognition as well as non-cooperation and non-compliance.

We have already begun to see some of this municipal civil disobedience. Monterey County, PA ignored the Help America Vote Act deadline, citing an unfunded mandate, and refusing to spend taxpayer money on election matters; our Consent is given, however begrudgingly. The VCR is a unit, community-level way to begin municipal civil disobedience. This is about non-recognition as well as non-cooperation and non-compliance.

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By Ralph Nader

Richard Cohen, the finely-calibrated syndicated columnist for the Washington Post, wrote a column on October 28, 2004 which commenced with this stark talk: “I do not write the headlines for my columns. Some- one else does. But if I were to write the headline for one, it would be ‘Impeach George W. Bush and Dick Cheney.’

Cohen stated the obvious then. Bush and Cheney had plunged the na- tion into war “under false pretenses.” Exception of George W. Bush and Dick Chan- deley, Bush had persuaded, over the uncrisscrossed media day, after day, before the war, a majority of the Amer- ican people that Saddam Hussein pos- sessed chemical, biological weapons and nuclear weapons programs, was connected to al-Qaeda and 9/11 and was a threat to the United States. “These falsehoods, Cohen wrote, “are a direct consequence of the admin- istration’s repeated lies - lies of com- mission, such as Cheney’s statements, and omission.”

Fourteen months later, no widely syndicated columnist or major newspa- per editorial has called for the impeach- ment of President and Vice President. This can change. As Senator Russell Feingold said a few days ago: “The President is not a King. His actions violate our laws and Constitution of the land. Ap- parently, George W. Bush seems to believe and behave as if his unlimited powers flow from King George III, the way he has shoved aside both federal law and the nation’s Constitution.

Bush and Cheney should resign. They have dis- graced their office and bled the nation. They have shattered the public trust in so many serious ways that will only become worse in the coming months.

Commentary

By Wes Rolley

Californians should not have needed the catastrophe of Hurricane Katrina and the flooding of New Orleans to force us to pay attention to things in our own state. We have been paying the price of scandal after scandal since 2004 that cost California nearly $100 Million in property damage, repair costs and lost income. In 1997, we had flood- ing in the San Joaquin Valley that dam- aged or destroyed 30,000 homes and 2,000 businesses. Why, then do I still read, as I did in a Visalia Times-Delta editorial this week, that “Tulare County’s levee system is a disaster waiting to happen, and no one is taking any action to prevent it.”

Most of California’s vast levee sys- tems are maintained by local, under- funded Local Reclamation Districts. As the Times-Delta noted, the last steward of one district retired this month at the age of 80 and there is no one taking his place. The Times-Delta cited both federal and county issues confronting a small city in a rural county. The health of the water in the Sacramento – San Joaquin River system is arguably the single most important issue that we have. This water supply supports not only the largest food grow-

Green Focus Newspaper of the GPCA Page 7

Bush/Cheney Have Disgraced Their Office; They Should Resign

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Joaquín Delta Levee Breaks Blamed on Greed, Poor Planning and Cronyism With Big Money

The loss of reliable, drinkable water from the Delta would have a devastating effect on California’s economy and the quality of life. The result would be an economic disaster for the Bay Area. Bush and Dick Cheney are probably the most impeach- able President and Vice President in American history. An illegal war based on lies, deceptions, cover-ups and their repetition even after being told by offi- cials in their own administration - not to mention critical retired generals, diplo- mats and security specialists - of their falsity should have prodded the House of Representatives into initiating im- peachment proceedings. But then, Bush did not move to impeach.

A majority of the American people have turned against this war-quaqu журнала. Without a doubt, the war is being fought to save our nation’s interest. They want the soldiers to return safely home. In increasing num- bers are not to believe what Bush’s own CIA Director, Porter Goss, told the U.S. Senate last February. He noted, along with other officials since then, that U.S. forces are faced with many more challenges than ever before. Many have been killed or wounded, and thousands remain missing.

As Senator Russell Feingold said a few days ago: “The President is not a King. His actions violate our laws and Constitution of the land. Ap- parently, George W. Bush seems to believe and behave as if his unlimited powers flow from King George III, the way he has shoved aside both federal law and the nation’s Constitution.

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1. Grassroots Democracy

Every human being deserves a say in the decisions that affect their lives and not be subject to the will of another. Therefore, we will work to increase public participation at every level of government and to ensure that our public representatives are fully accountable to the people who elect them. We will also work to create new types of political organizations which expand the process of participatory democracy by directly including citizens in the decision-making process.

3. Social Justice and Equality

All persons should have the rights and opportunity to benefit equally from the resources afforded us by society and the environment. We must consciously confront in ourselves, our organizations, and society at large, barriers such as racism and class oppression, sexism and homophobia, ageism and disability, which act to deny fair treatment and equal justice under the law.

4. Non-Violence

It is essential that we develop effective alternatives to society’s current patterns of violence. We will work to demilitarize, and eliminate weapons of mass destruction, without being naive about the intentions of other governments. We recognize the need for self-defense and the defense of others who are in helpless situations. We promote non-violent methods to oppose practices and policies with which we disagree, and will guide our actions toward lasting personal, community and global peace.

5. Decentralization

Centralization of wealth and power contributes to social and economic injustices, environmental destruction, and militarization. Therefore, we support a restructuring of social, political and economic institutions away from a system which is controlled by and mostly benefits the powerful few, to a democratic, less bureaucratic system. Decision-making should, as much as possible, remain at the individual and local level, while assuring that civil rights are protected for all citizens.

6. Community Based Economics and Economic Justice

We recognize it is essential to create a vibrant and sustainable economic system, one that can create jobs and provide a decent standard of living for all people while maintaining a healthy ecological balance. A successful economic system will offer meaningful work with dignity, while paying a “living wage” which reflects the real value of a person’s work. Local communities must look to economic development that assures protection of the environment and workers’ rights; broad citizen participation in planning; and enhancement of our “quality of life.”

7. Feminism

We have inherited a social system based on male domination of politics and economics. We call for the replacement of the cultural ethics of domination and control with more cooperative ways of interacting that respect differences of opinion and gender. Human values such as equity between the sexes, interpersonal responsibility, and honesty must be developed with moral conscience. We should remember that the process that determines our decisions and actions is just as important as achieving the outcome we want.

8. Respect for Diversity

We believe it is important to value cultural, ethnic, racial, sexual, religious and spiritual diversity, and to promote the development of respectful relationships across these lines. We believe that the many diverse elements of society should be reflected in our organizations and decision-making bodies, and we support the leadership of people who have been traditionally closed out of leadership roles. We acknowledge and encourage respect for other life forms than our own and the preservation of biodiversity.

9. Personal and Global Responsibility

We encourage individuals to act to improve their personal well-being and, at the same time, to enhance ecological balance and social harmony. We seek to join with people and organizations around the world to foster peace, economic justice, and the health of the planet.

10. Future Focus and Sustainability

Our actions and policies should be motivated by long-term goals. We seek to protect valuable natural resources, safely disposing of or “unmaking” all waste we create, while developing a sustainable economics that does not depend on continual expansion for survival. We must counterbalance the drive for short-term profits by assuring that economic development, new technologies, and fiscal policies are responsible to future generations who will inherit the results of our actions.